

Introduction

The gold standard for veteran population estimates is the decennial census of the population conducted by the Census Bureau, a subunit of the U.S. Department of Commerce. The latest census, Census 2000, provides the basis for the tables and maps presented in this chapter. Veteran status and period of service questions were asked on the Census 2000 long form that was distributed to 1-in-6 households. The questions as they appeared on the survey are presented below:

20a. Has this person ever served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, military Reserves, or National Guard? *Active duty does not include training for the Reserves or National Guard, but DOES include activation, for example, for the Persian Gulf War.*

- ☐ Yes, now on active duty
- ☐ Yes, on active duty in past, but not now
- □ No, training for Reserves or National Guard only
- □ No, never served in the military
- b. When did this person serve on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces? *Mark x for EACH period in which this person served.*
 - □ April 1995 or later
 - August 1990 to March 1995 (including Persian Gulf War)
 - □ September 1980 to July 1990
 - ☐ May 1975 to August 1980
 - □ Vietnam era (August 1964 April 1975)
 - □ February 1955 to July 1964
 - □ Korean conflict (June 1950 January 1955)
 - □ World War II (September 1940 July 1947)
 - □ Some other time

- c. In total, how many years of active-duty military service has this person had?
 - □ Less than 2 years
 - □ 2 years or more

Data Sources

The data source for the maps and tables in this chapter come from the Census Web site (http://www.census.gov). Total veteran population was abstracted from the 100 and Sample profile database at:

http://www2.census.gov/census_2000/datasets/100_and_sample_pro_file/. This file was released in June 2002.

Information regarding the veteran population by age (under 65 years, 65 years and older) and by gender was obtained from the Summary File 3 data that was released on a state-by-state basis throughout the year 2002.

In the Department of Veterans Affairs, data on veterans can be obtained by region, state, congressional district, period of service by state, and age by sex by state in an easy pull down menu format at: http://www.va.gov/vetdata/Census2000/.

Data Presented

The tables and maps presented in this chapter portray the veteran population at the Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN), state, and county level. Of special note is that in FY-2000 the VHA had 22 VISNs; that number decreased in FY-2002 when VISN 13 and VISN 14 were combined to form VISN 23.

National and VISN Totals

Table 1.1 presents the number of veterans by age and gender for each of the Veteran Integrated Service Networks (VISN), as well as a national total. In April 2000, there were an estimated 26,549,704 veterans living in the United States and Puerto Rico. The most populous VISNs include the South Central (VISN 16), the Sunshine (VISN 8), and the Desert Pacific (VISN 22) Networks. The VISNs with the lowest numbers of veterans were the Central Plains (VISN 14) with 495,976 veterans, Upstate New York (VISN 2) with 617,040 veterans, and the Upper Midwest (VISN 13) with 688,301 veterans.

Elderly Veterans

Nationally, 9,722,988 veterans were 65 years of age and older in April 2000. This number represents approximately 37% of the total veteran population. VISNs with largest numbers of veterans 65 years of age and older include the Sunshine Network (VISN 8), the Stars and Strips Network (4) and the South Central Network (16). Older veterans as a percentage of total veteran population, however, show that the New York/New Jersey (VISN 3) had the largest proportion of its veteran population 65 years of age and older (45.2%). VISN 8 was second in terms of the proportion of older veterans (44.4%), followed by the Stars and Stripes Network (VISN 4) and New England (VISN 1) each with over 40% of their veteran population 65 years of age and older. VISNs that had the lowest percentage of older veterans included: the Atlantic (VISN 7) with 30.3%, Capital (VISN 5) with 31.1%, and Northwest (VISN 20) with 31.3% in the 65 years of age and over category.

Female Veterans

The number of female veterans totaled 1,600,122 in April 2000. There were five VISNs where the total number of female veterans exceeded 100,000 individuals: South Central (VISN 16), Sunshine (VISN 8), Desert Pacific (VISN 22), Atlantic (VISN 7), and MidAtlantic (VISN 6).

Nationally, female veterans represent about 6% of the total veteran population. Female veterans, as a percentage of the total VISN veteran population, ranged from a low of 4.7% in the New York/New Jersey Network (VISN 3) to a high of 8.4% in the Capital Network (VISN 5).

Veterans as a Percent of the Civilian Population

Table 1.2 provides information on the total veteran population, the number of the civilian population 18 years and older, and veterans as a percentage of the civilian population over the age of 18. By VISN, the percent veteran in the civilian population ranged from a low of 8.4% in the New York/New Jersey (VISN 3) Network to a high of 15.5% in the Northwest Network (VISN 20).

The total, number of veterans 65 years of age and older and the number of female veterans are displayed graphically in Maps1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 below. We present numbers rather than percentages because of feedback given to us by several Network Directors during the Special Poster Session at the HSR&D Annual Meeting in February 2003.

Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) Table 1.1: Veteran Population by Age (<65,65+) and Gender

Veteran Population by Age (<65, 65+) and Gender					
	Veterans I	ntegrated Servi	ice Network, Ap	oril 2000	
Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN)		Veterans	Female Veterans		Total Veterans
	18 - 64 Years	65 and older	18 - 64 Years	65 and older	All ages
New England (1)	739,386	517,738	47,238	23,571	1,327,933
Upstate NY (2)	349,666	236,084	22,976	8,314	617,040
NY/NJ (3)	634,436	538,921	40,592	17,040	1,230,989
Stars and Stripes (4)	895,919	659,795	57,520	22,120	1,635,354
Capitol (5)	511,731	245,914	58,365	11,056	827,066
Mid-Atlantic (6)	852,560	425,684	91,231	14,403	1,383,878
Atlantic (7)	953,749	440,065	93,161	14,170	1,501,145
Sunshine (8)**	990,473	825,660	86,389	33,204	1,935,726
Mid-South (9)	677,470	362,135	49,215	10,428	1,099,248
Ohio (10)	632,624	378,427	42,498	12,528	1,066,077
Vets in Partnership (11)	920,873	538,295	57,665	16,518	1,533,351
Great Lakes (12)	710,253	450,257	47,022	14,332	1,221,864
Upper Midwest (13)	411,024	244,384	25,454	7,439	688,301
Central Plains (14)	285,142	186,749	18,561	5,524	495,976
Heartland (15)	604,816	370,747	44,496	10,706	1,030,765
South Central (16)	1,183,331	643,006	99,278	21,296	1,946,911
Heart of Texas (17)	678,128	333,973	67,548	12,830	1,092,479
Southwest (18)	542,357	341,101	50,254	14,817	948,529
Rocky Mt. (19)	500,109	246,447	42,751	10,062	799,369
Northwest (20)	789,976	372,847	68,205	17,680	1,248,708
Sierra Pacific (21)	751,895	445,220	60,734	22,416	1,280,265
Desert Pacific (22)	959,717	570,498	79,928	28,587	1,638,730
National Total	15,575,635	9,373,947	1,251,081	349,041	26,549,704

^{**}Total includes Puerto Rico

Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN)
Table 1.2: Veteran Population as a Percentage of the Civilian Population

Veteran Population as a Percentage of the Civilian Population 18+ by VISN, 2000					
Veterans Integrated Service Network	Veteran Population	Civilian Population 18+	% Veteran		
New England (1)	1,327,933	10,514,917	12.6		
Upstate New York (2)	617,040	4,575,499	13.5		
New York/New Jersey (3)	1,230,989	14,630,331	8.4		
Stars and Stripes (4)	1,635,345	11,906,886	13.7		
Capital (5)	827,066	6,205,775	13.3		
Mid-Atlantic (6)	1,383,878	9,772,405	14.2		
Atlantic (7)	1,501,145	11,248,622	13.3		
Sunshine (8)	1,935,726	14,731,512	13.1		
Mid-South (9)	1,099,248	8,643,762	12.7		
Ohio (10)	1,066,077	7,873,735	13.5		
Vets in Partnership (11)	1,533,351	12,217,202	12.6		
Great Lakes (12)	1,221,864	11,011,383	11.1		
Upper Midwest (13)	688,301	5,246,681	13.1		
Central Plains (14)	495,975	3,643,105	13.6		
Heartland (15)	1,030,765	7,296,393	14.1		
South Central (16)	1,946,911	14,858,491	13.1		
Heart of Texas (17)	1,092,479	8,927,720	12.2		
Southwest (18)	948,529	6,675,678	14.2		
Rocky Mountain (19)	799,369	5,934,488	13.5		
Northwest (20)	1,248,708	8,079,374	15.5		
Sierra Pacific (21)	1,280,265	11,012,887	11.6		
Desert Pacific (22)	1,638,730	15,789,561	10.4		

Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN)

Map 1.1: Total Veteran Population

Pacific Ocean

20

Alaska

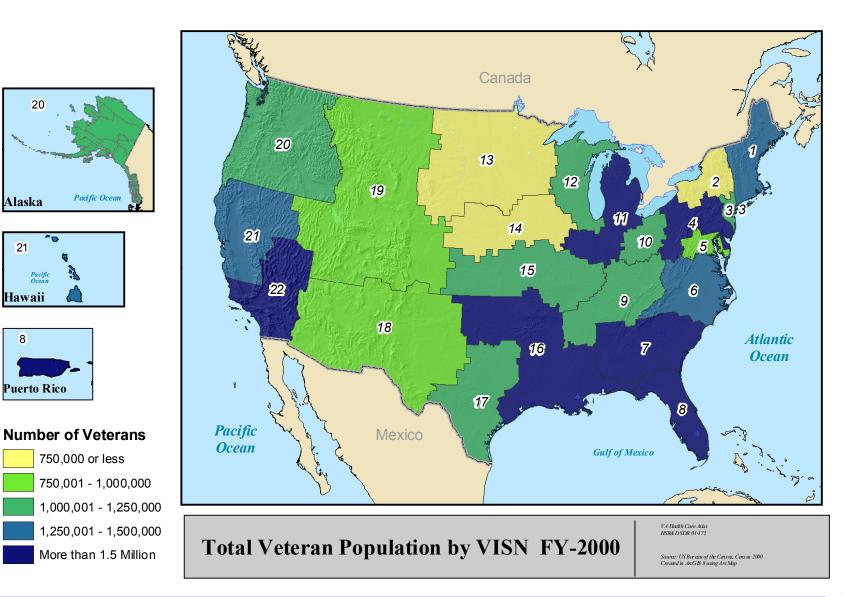
21

Hawaii

8

Puerto Rico

750,000 or less



Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN)

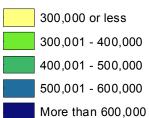
Map 1. 2: Veteran Population 65+

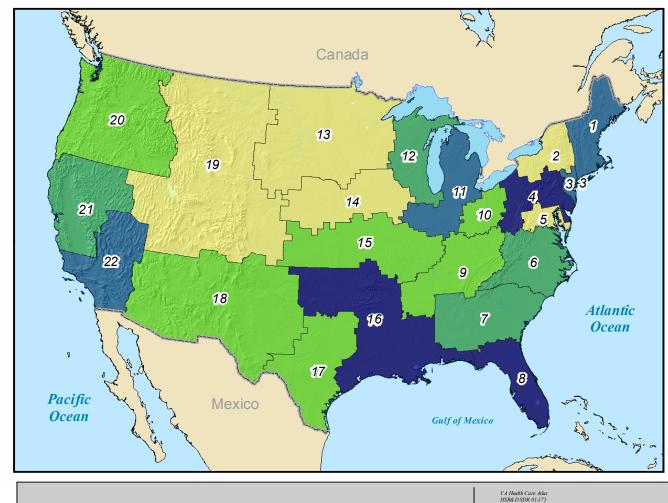






Number of Veterans



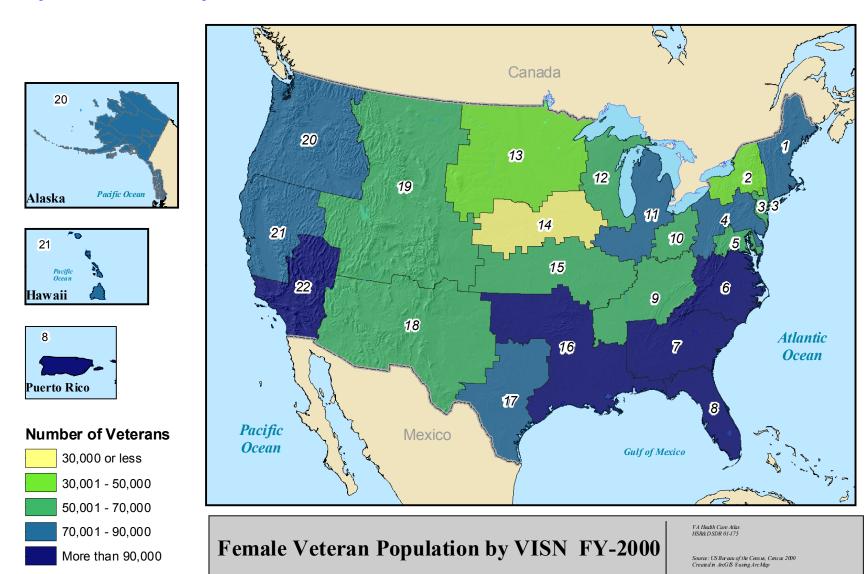


Veteran Population Aged 65+ by VISN, FY-2000

Source: US Bureau of the Census, Census 2000 Created in ArcG & 8 using ArcMap

Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN)

Map 1.3: Female Veteran Population



State Veteran Population

Table 1.3 presents the number of veterans by age and gender for each state. The top ten states in terms of total veteran population in April 2000 were (in rank order): California (2,569,340), Florida (1,875,597), Texas (1,754,809), New York (1,361,164), Pennsylvania (1,280,788), Ohio (1,144,007) Illinois (1,003,572), Michigan (913,573), North Carolina (792,646), and Virginia (786,359).

Elderly Veterans

The states with the largest elderly veteran population follow a similar rank and pattern as the total veteran population for the top two states, but the ranking for the remaining states is slightly different. In addition, the number of older veterans in New Jersey makes the top ten for the elderly population and the state of Virginia falls out. The most populous states with veterans 65 years of age and older are California, Florida, New York, Texas, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, Michigan, New Jersey, and North Carolina. Older veterans as a percentage of total veteran population shows that, with the exception of the state of Florida, the older veteran population appears to favor the Northeast section of the country. The state with the highest proportion of their veteran population 65 years of age and older was New Jersey (44%). Florida, a popular retirement destination, ranked second with 43.9% of the state's veteran population 65 years of age and older. Other states with relatively high percentages of older

veterans were: Massachusetts (43.2%), Connecticut (42.5%), Pennsylvania (42.5%), New York (42.4%), and Rhode Island (41.9%).

Female Veterans

Three states had a female veteran population exceeding 100,000 individuals in 2000: California, Florida, and Texas. Female veterans as a percent of all veterans in the state was highest in Alaska (9.9%). Other states with a relatively large proportion of the veteran population female included: Virginia, the District of Columbia, Maryland, Georgia, Hawaii, Colorado, New Mexico and the state of Washington.

Veterans as a Percent of the Civilian Population

Table 1.4 contains data on the total number of civilians 18 years of age and older, the number of veterans in the state, and veterans as a percent of the civilian population. Veterans, as a percentage of the civilian population, range from a high of 17.1% in the state of Alaska to a low of 9.5% in the state of New York. Three Western states, Montana (16.2%), Nevada (16.1%), and Wyoming (16.0%), follow Alaska in the proportion of their state's population having service time in the Armed Forces.

Maps 1.4, 1.5, and 1.6 graphically present the total, elderly, and female veteran populations by state.

State Veteran PopulationTable 1.3: Veteran Population by Age (<65,65+) and Gender

Veteran Population by Age (<65, 65+) and Gender by State, April 2000					
	Total Veteran	Male Vo	eterans	Female Veterans	
State	Population	18-64	65+	18-64	65+
Alabama	447,397	268,064	151,644	23,345	4,344
Alaska	71,552	53,119	11,323	6,566	544
Arizona	562,916	314,457	209,542	29,079	9,838
Arkansas	281,714	165,846	99,929	12,844	3,095
California	2,569,340	1,498,398	904,612	119,926	46,404
Colorado	446,385	287,524	125,424	27,703	5,734
Connecticut	310,069	167,711	127,024	10,477	4,857
Delaware	84,289	49,985	28,941	4,381	982
DC	44,484	23,578	17,119	2,756	1,031
Florida	1,875,597	962,706	790,574	89,173	33,144
Georgia	768,675	507,353	201,612	53,031	6,679
Hawaii	120,587	72,148	39,283	7,680	1,476
Idaho	136,584	84,512	43,873	6,598	1,601
Illinois	1,003,572	573,625	379,612	38,971	11,364
Indiana	590,476	361,359	200,002	23,074	6,041
Iowa	292,020	167,071	112,347	9,273	3,329
Kansas	267,452	156,233	96,213	12,290	2,716
Kentucky	380,618	232,360	128,310	16,079	3,869
Louisiana	392,486	235,364	132,585	20,218	4,319
Maine	154,590	92,555	53,062	6,601	2,372
Maryland	524,230	318,731	163,935	34,934	6,630
Massachusetts	558,933	299,435	230,170	18,046	11,282
Michigan	913,573	547,041	322,527	34,039	9,966

State Veteran Population
Table 1.3: Veteran Population by Age (<65,65+) and Gender (continued)

Vetera	nn Population by Age				
	Total Veteran	tate, April 2000 (continued) Al Veteran Male Veterans Femal			eterans
State	Population	18-64	65+	18-64	65+
Minnesota	464,968	280,579	163,086	15,977	5,326
Mississippi	249,431	147,914	85,554	13,139	2,824
Missouri	592,271	349,408	211,497	25,412	5,954
Montana	108,476	65,839	36,124	5,006	1,507
Nebraska	173,189	100,838	62,281	8,257	1,813
Nevada	238,128	147,132	74,241	13,543	3,212
New Hampshire	139,038	86,027	44,998	5,681	2,332
New Jersey	672,217	355,197	286,574	21,202	9,244
New Mexico	190,718	113,834	62,695	11,421	2,768
New York	1,361,164	733,607	559,121	49,855	18,581
North Carolina	792,646	486,605	251,001	46,557	8,483
North Dakota	61,365	36,476	21,419	2,930	540
Ohio	1,144,007	676,247	409,665	44,534	13,561
Oklahoma	376,062	227,280	127,437	17,408	3,937
Oregon	388,990	235,138	130,093	17,453	6,306
Pennsylvania	1,280,788	692,913	527,033	43,143	17,699
Rhode Island	102,494	55,705	41,371	3,872	1,546
South Carolina	420,971	263,025	129,614	24,024	4,308
South Dakota	79,370	45,885	28,891	3,862	732
Tennessee	560,141	349,949	177,837	27,333	5,022
Texas	1,754,809	1,087,651	547,549	99,447	20,162
Utah	161,351	94,901	58,249	6,324	1,877
Vermont	62,809	37,953	21,113	2,561	1,182
Virginia	786,359	497,497	217,777	62,302	8,783
Washington	670,628	428,589	194,426	38,147	9,466
West Virginia	201,701	117,944	74,536	7,046	2,175
Wisconsin	514,213	304,250	184,691	19,230	6,042
Wyoming	57,860	37,036	17,319	2,850	655
National Total	26,403,703	15,494,594	9,315,855	1,245,600	347,654

State Veteran Population

Table 1.4: Veterans as a Percentage of Civilian Population 18+ By State, 2000			
State	Veteran Population	Civilian Population 18+	Percent Veteran
Alabama	447,397	3,310,446	13.5
Alaska	71,552	419,320	17.1
Arizona	562,916	3,747,180	15.0
Arkansas	281,714		14.2
California	2,569,340	24,501,941	10.5
Colorado	446,385	3,177,044	14.1
Connecticut	310,069	2,557,792	12.1
Delaware	84,289	585,855	14.4
DC	44,484	454,454	9.8
Florida	1,875,597	12,283,486	15.3
Georgia	768,675	5,954,362	12.9
Hawaii	120,587	878,220	13.7
Idaho	136,584	920,973	14.8
Illinois	1,003,572	9,158,208	11.0
Indiana	590,476		13.1
Iowa	292,020	2,192,132	13.3
Kansas	267,452	1,962,154	13.6
Kentucky	380,618	3,028,902	12.6
Louisiana	392,486	3,232,426	12.1
Maine	154,590	969,780	15.9
Maryland	524,230	3,910,942	13.4
Massachusetts	558,933	4,847,708	11.5
Michigan	913,573		12.4
Minnesota	464,968	3,630,355	12.8
Mississippi	249,431	2,054,721	12.1

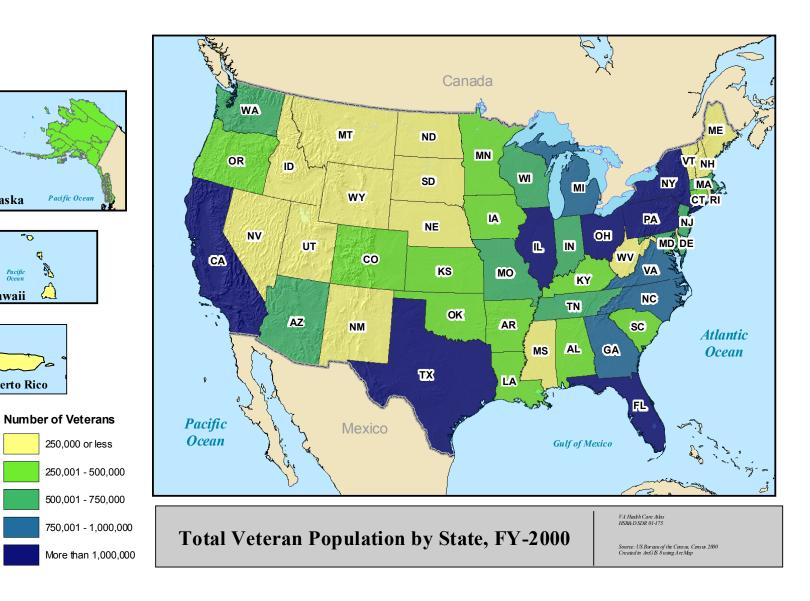
Table 1.4: Veterans as a Percentage of Civilian Population (cont)					
State	Veteran Population	Civilian Population 18+	Percent Veteran		
Missouri	592,271	4,153,926	14.3		
Montana	108,476	668,651	16.2		
Nebraska	173,189	1,253,717	13.8		
Nevada	238,128	1,480,440	16.1		
New Hampshire	139,038	926,066	15.0		
New Jersey	672,217	6,321,650	10.6		
New Mexico	190,718	1,300,288	14.7		
New York	1,361,164	14,278,716	9.5		
North Carolina	792,646	5,997,177	13.2		
North Dakota	61,365	474,210	12.9		
Ohio	1,144,007	8,458,130	13.5		
Oklahoma	376,062	2,536,569	14.8		
Oregon	388,990	2,574,798	15.1		
Pennsylvania	1,280,788	9,354,471	13.7		
Rhode Island	102,494	797,047	12.9		
South Carolina	420,971	2,967,197	14.2		
South Dakota	79,370	548,771	14.5		
Tennessee	560,141	4,274,395	13.1		
Texas	1,754,809	14,871,550	11.8		
Jtah	161,351	1,510,842	10.7		
Vermont	62,809	460,487	13.6		
Virginia	786,359	5,211,916	15.1		
Washington	670,628	4,336,464	15.5		
West Virginia	201,701	1,404,936	14.4		
Visconsin	514,213	3,993,440	12.9		
Wyoming	57,860	362,387	16.0		

State Veteran Population Map 1.4: Total Veteran Population

Alaska

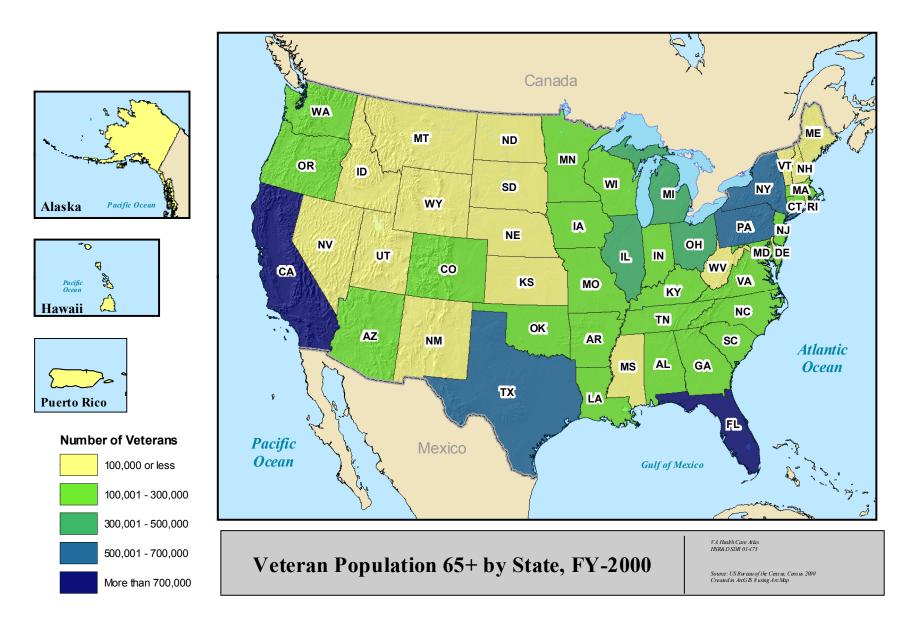
Hawaii

Puerto Rico



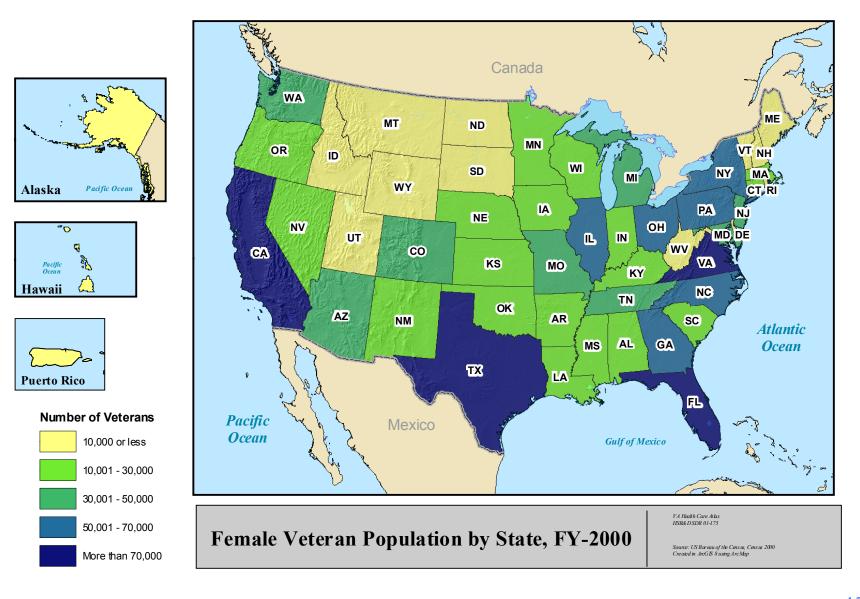
State Veteran Population

Map 1.5: Veteran Population 65+



State Veteran Population

Map 1.6: Female Veteran Population



County Veteran Population

Veteran population by age and gender for each county in the United States are available upon request. Counties that had the largest veteran population in 2000 were (in rank order):

- 1. Los Angeles County, California (510,712)
- 2. Cook County, Illinois (352,791)
- 3. Maricopa County, Arizona (307,784)
- 4. San Diego County, California (292,034)
- 5. Harris County, Texas (219, 966)
- 6. Orange County, California (193,548)
- 7. Wayne County, Michigan (172,435)
- 8. King County, Washington (163,815)
- 9. Clark County, Nevada (158,864)
- 10. Bexar County, Texas (153,696)

Elderly Veterans

The counties with the largest elderly veteran population included Los Angeles, Cook, Maricopa, San Diego, Harris, Orange and Wayne Counties similar to the total veteran population, but two Florida counties, Palm Beach and Broward, were also represented in the top ten list for veterans 65 years of age and older. Allegany County in Pennsylvania also made the top ten in the numbers of older veterans residing in the area.

Female Veterans

Similar to the total and elderly population, many of the most populous counties also contained relatively large numbers of female veterans. The top ten counties for female veterans are:

- 1. Los Angeles County, California (30,483)
- 2. San Diego County, California (25,895)
- 3. Maricopa County, Arizona (21,111)
- 4. Cook County, Illinois (18,740)
- 5. Bexar County, Texas (17,089)
- 6. Harris County, Texas (14,574)
- 7. Clark County, Nevada (11,378)
- 8. King County, Washington (11,001)
- 9. Orange County, California (10,542)
- 10. Dallas County, Texas (10,468)

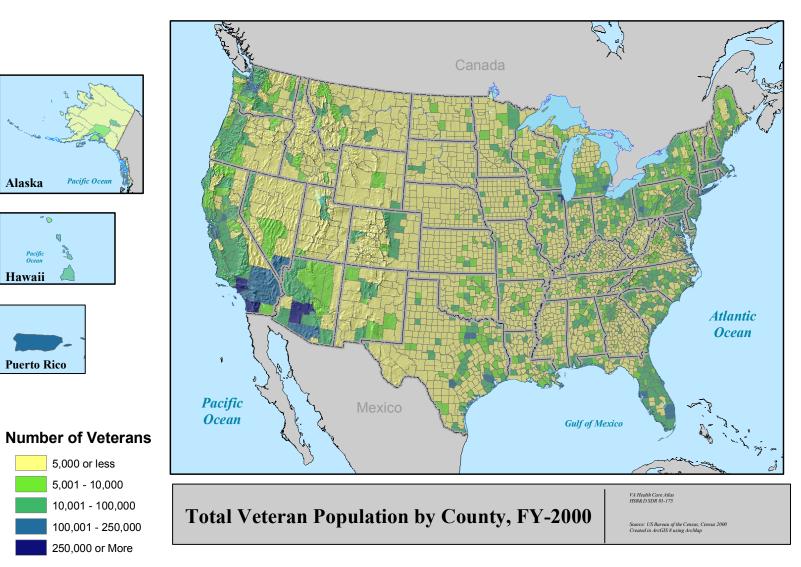
Veterans as a Percent of the Civilian Population

The percent veteran in the civilian population ranges from 39.1% in Elmore County, Idaho to a low of 0% in Kalawao County, Hawaii (this was the only county in United States that had 0% veterans).

Maps 1.7, 1.8, and 1.9 present the total, elderly, and female veteran population by county. Additionally, Maps 1.10-1.14 graphically display veterans as a proportion of the civilian population by county, with detail provided by VISN.

County Veteran Population

Map 1.7: Total Veteran Population



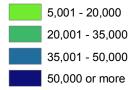
County Veteran Population Map 1.8: Veteran Population 65+

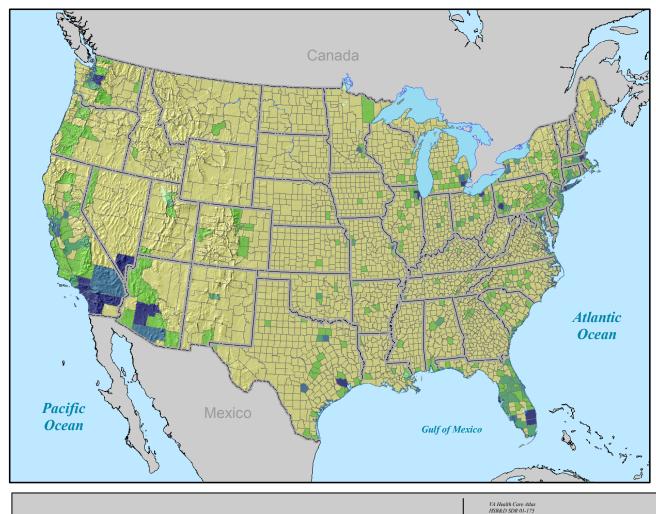






Number of Veterans





Veteran Population 65+ by County, FY-2000

Source: US Bureau of the Census, Census 2000 Created in ArcGIS 8 using ArcMap

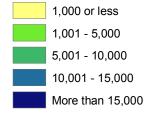
County Veteran Population Map 1.9: Female Veteran Population

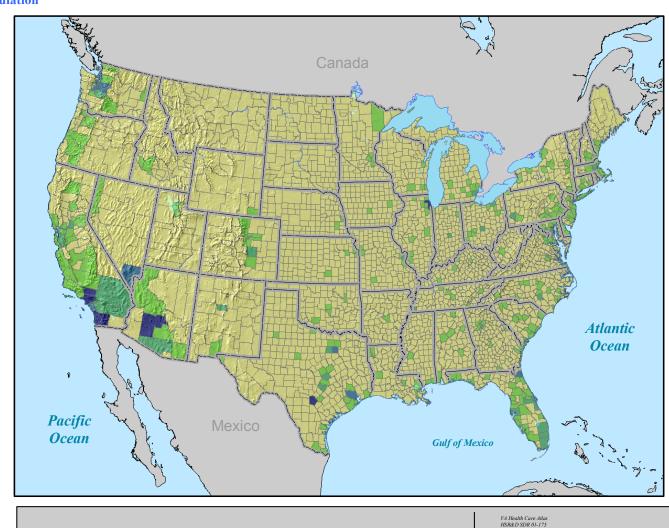






Number of Veterans

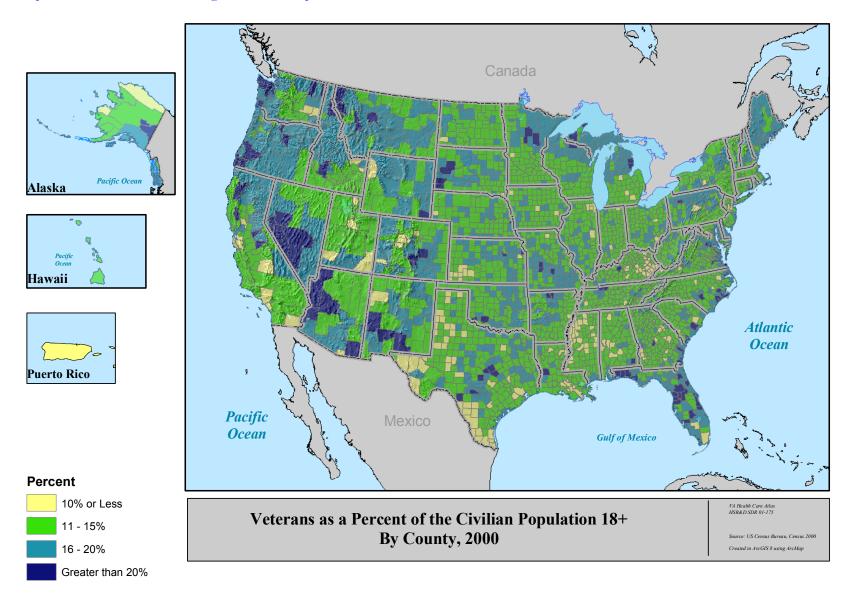




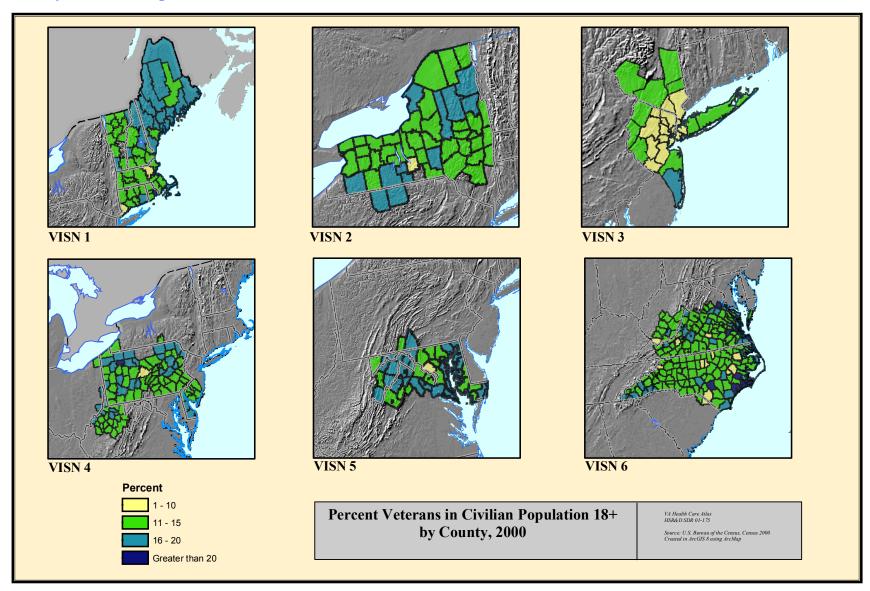
Female Veteran Population by County, FY-2000

Source: US Bureau of the Census, Census 2000 Created in ArcGIS 8 using ArcMap

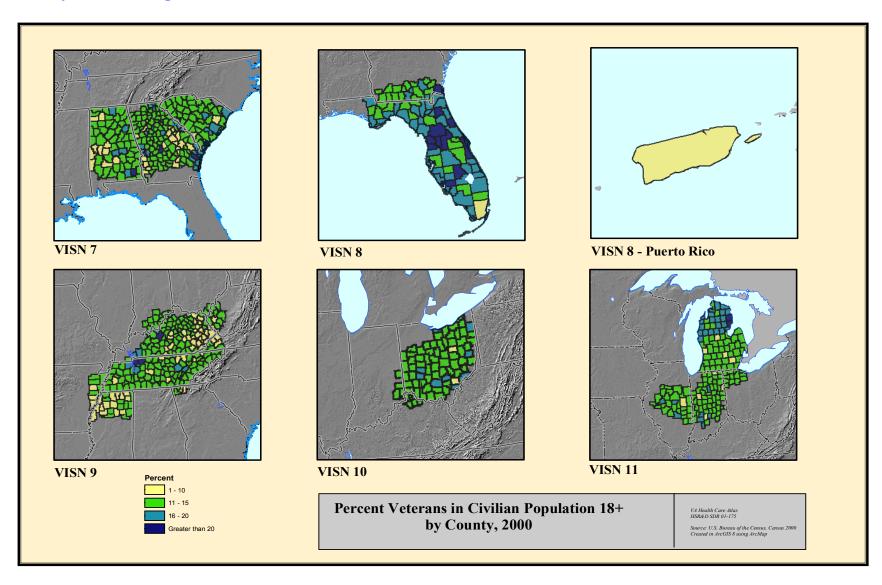
County Veteran Population Map 1.10: Veterans as a Percentage of Civilian Population



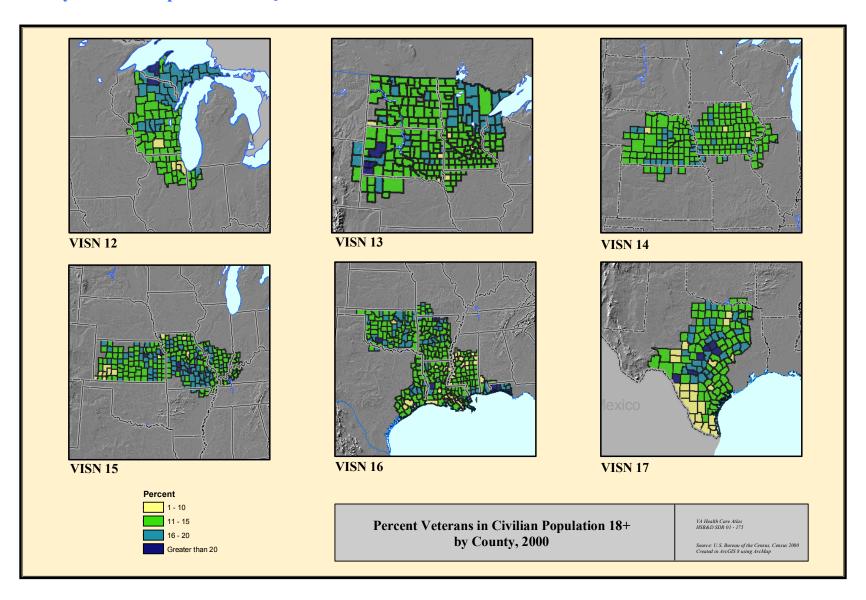
County Veteran Population - Map 1.11



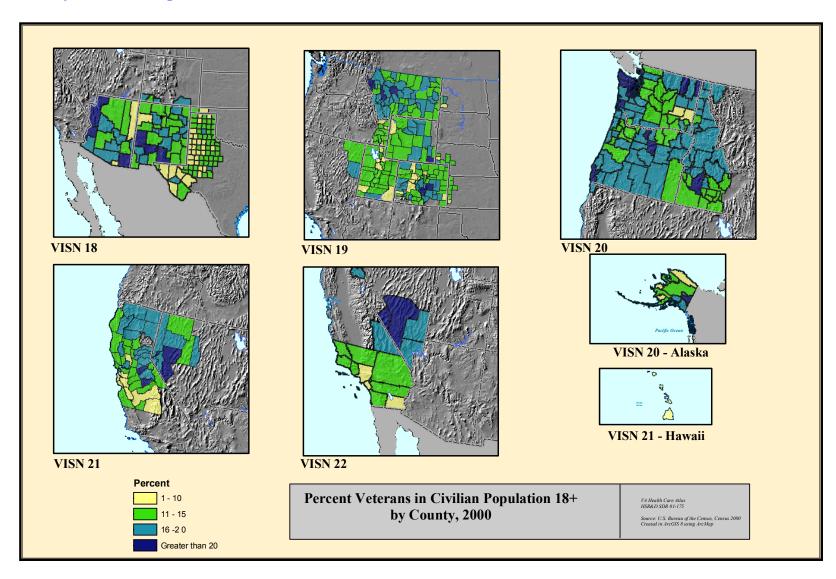
County Veteran Population – Map 1.12



County Veteran Population – Map 1.13



County Veteran Population – Map 1.14



For More Information

While the Census 2000 is the best source of information on veteran population estimates in the year 2000, researchers and other individuals may require population estimates and projections beyond this base year. In the Department of Veterans Affairs, the best source of information for population projections is the VA Office of Policy and Planning. The Actuarial Analysis & Data Development Service is responsible for developing operational or administrative information to address such things as long- and short-term trends in veteran population and workload. It develops and is the official national source for veteran population projections, working with Census data and various actuarially-sound assumptions. To see the wide array of veteran data the Service has compiled, visit the Web site: http://www.va.gov/vetdata

The Chief Actuary's responsibilities include analysis of the base population's demographics; disability and utilization rates; cost effects of amending benefits amounts or eligibility rules; and adequacy of program funding under various functions. The Service is responsible for the design and conduct of the National Survey of Veterans. The Service identifies, collects, and disseminates existing data within VA and establishes as necessary exchanges with other government and private sector organizations. They are likewise responsible for identifying and obtaining access to non-VA data that contain veteran identifiers and which further inform VA's information base and allow enhanced comparative analysis of veterans and non-veterans.

To contact this office:

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